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MONOGRAPHS OF DECORATIVE ART

# Vinovo and its Porcelain

(A PAGE OF THE HISTORY OF ART IN PIEDMONT)

The ancient noble seat • The Chemist Victor Amedeus Gioannetti • The Manufactory • The different periods and various events • The artist • The products • The forms • The decorations • The special characteristics • The potters' marks • Bibliography • XXXIV Illustrative plates

by

L. De-Mauri (E. Sarasino)

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TO THE TURINESE  
BARON CARLO F. DE MARGHERITA

COLONEL IN THE ROYAL ARMY  
CHEVALIER OF THE ORDER OF SS. MAURICE AND LAZARUS  
AND OF THE CROWN OF ITALY  
OF VAST AND VARIED CULTURE  
AN ELEGANT LITTERATEUR  
A WITTY NARRATOR AND ACCURATE INVESTIGATOR OF THE MATTERS OF HIS COUNTRY  
THIS VOLUME  
AS A TOKEN OF OLD AND FIRM FRIENDSHIP  
THE AUTHOR DEDICATES

•





## The Ancient Noble Site of the Manufactory.

Hail, O Piedmont, Hail! Unto thee from afar,  
 Descend the rivers with sad music resounding,  
 Like the epic chants of thy gallant people.  
 The rivers descend, swollen, vigorous, rapid,  
 Like thy hundred battalions, and rushing to the valley,  
 Seek the wakeful cities, seek the wakeful hamlets,  
 To speak to them of glory.

G. CARDUCCI "*Piedmont* , , ,

**V**INOVO is a pleasant village of about three thousand inhabitants, six miles from Turin, on the way to Stupinigi, the hunting-ground of the royal family of Savoy. Near it, flows the stream Chisola, a tributary of the Po, whose limpid waters glide over clear, white gravel. At the entrance of the village, rises a majestic, ancient castle (*of real importance in the history of Piedmontese architecture*) the property of the two brothers Guy and Hugh Rei, who preserve it with their well-known intelligence and love of art.

This is one of the many edifices which rose in Piedmont in the XIV century as dwellings for the Lords of the manors, their solidity being insured by all those works of defence which the art of war then suggested.

The long period of existence of this manor-house, and the different uses to which it was put, caused the many variations undergone by the primitive architecture of the building.



Among such successive changes, specially important from an artistic point of view, are the court-yard with its rich decoration in Renaissance terre-cotte, and the stucco ornamentation of some rooms on the ground floor, in the style which is barbarously named from the kings Louis XIV and XV. Lately, the largest of these rooms was adorned with fine frescoes by the painters Rudolph and Lewis Morgari.

The castle was a square foundation, with a tower at each of the four corners and a court-yard in the middle. This construction, like that of other Piedmontese castles of the time, was much altered about the seventeenth century, when a story was added to all the building and the towers on the east were truncated, so that the primitive proportion of the edifice was changed, and it partly lost that which gave it its character of defence. The towers at the west were remade, and the façade, which united them, was completely transformed through the addition of a series of grand flights of steps leading to the garden, once a delightful park. As in all the restorations of this period, the ditch, defending the primitive castle was filled up.

Fortunately, the architects of the time respected the artistic decoration of the court-yard and the present owners drew to the light interesting paintings, a fresco, on the parapet of the first floor which, as usual, had been whitewashed, during the sojourn in the castle, of the Jesuits of the College of Turin, certainly in order to conceal the nude figures of the Sirens which, as already said, reappeared, thanks to the painters Morgari.

The raising of the building somewhat varies the proportions of this court-yard, which however, is always noteworthy, because of its harmonious architectonic composition, and its superb decoration in Renaissance terra-cotta, very rare in Piedmont.

This decoration consists of oak-branches, leaves, and acorns. In the centre of the small capitals, which are above the fascia, stands out the coat-of-arms of the Della Rovere – an uprooted oak with

golden acorns, and with the branches twisted into the double cross of St. Andrew; a coat-of-arms to which Cardinal Della Rovere afterwards added his personal motto "SOLI DEO,, which is always to be found on the works ordered by him in Turin, in Rome, in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, and on the illuminated books, which he collected, or had carried out on his own account. Each of the above-mentioned small capitals is flanked by two medallions of Roman Emperors, taken from coins, medals, and ancient marbles, and modelled by the vigorous hand of an able artist, as may be seen from the illustrations at the end of this volume. On the whole, the decoration of this court-yard induces us to believe that these works must have been directed by one of those artificers engaged by Cardinal Della Rovere in the decoration of the cathedral of Turin, which he had had constructed entirely at his own expense, between 1492 and 1499, and the design of which, like that of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome, first attributed to Baccio Pontelli, was later recognized as being of Meo del Caprino, an architect of Settignano (near Florence, 1430-1501). And it is well to remember that in Santa Maria del Popolo, in the first chapel on the right, are enclosed the mortal remains of Cardinal Christopher Della Rovere, who died in the eighth year of the pontificate of Sixtus IV, as well as those of Cardinal Domenico Della Rovere. The magnificent work of sculpture consists of statues and decoration. Of the same period and, perhaps, by the same artist who gave us the terre-cotte, is the beautiful marble slab inserted into the steeple of the parish church. It, too, is a rare specimen in Piedmont. At the top, we find the coat-of-arms of the Della Rovere, and the letters of the inscription are very elegant.

The origin of the family Della Rovere of Piedmont, extinct in 1692, on the death of Charles, the last descendant, is lost in the darkness of the year 1000 and may be called dynastic, it being, along with the Romagnoni, the Vagnoni, the Cavoretto, and the

Manfredi, who were also lords of the place, among the oldest in Piedmont. From the mention of the Della Rovere in most important acts, we may deduce that, from the twelfth century on, they enjoyed very great authority. Turin, seeing a prince rising menacingly from Savoy, who was fated through virtue and fortune to further the destiny of his family, thought of strengthening her independence by means of various leagues, confederating in 1222, with the Marquis of Saluzzo, and shortly after, with the new Lombard League; then in 1228 with the Andrew Dauphin of Vienna, the two princes swore to the citizenship of Turin, and witness of this was one *James Della Rovere*. In 1262, Turin was subjected to Charles of Anjou, Count of Provence and King of Sicily, and was therefore Guelph; shortly after she became again Ghibelline, under William VII, Marquis of Monferrat from whom she was taken by Thomas III of Savoy in 1280. And, in those times, a *Piero Della Rovere* followed Charles of Anjou, who went back to Provence, composed verses as a troubadour and married a lady of the Neapolitan family Caraccioli who had also retired to that court. From the above details, it will be clear to my intelligent readers that I mean to make a clear DISTINCTION BETWEEN THIS PIEDMONTESE FAMILY DELLA ROVERE AND ALL THE OTHERS OF THE SAME NAME. *That of Savona* gave us the two popes, *Sixtus IV* and *Julius II* who proclaimed the first holy war “*Out with the Barbarians*,” and who later made peace with the Emperor Maximilian of Austria and Ludovic XII of France, in order to uphold the rights of the patrimony of St. Peter over the Marches against the invasions of the Venetians in terra firma; and this peace was called. The peace of *Chateau Cambresis*. Having chased the Bentivoglio from Bologna, he obtained the dominion of that town. His statue in bronze was fused and erected by Michelangelo on the attic of S. Petrovio, but was thrown down and destroyed by the Bolognese, when they chased out the pontifical party and restored the family Bentivoglio, by making prince the last descendant of that

family, belonging to the town. With the fragments of the statue, Alphonse I of Este formed a bombard which was christened "*La Giulia*," From Rome, the nephews of Pope Julius I, passed to URBINO, where they obtained the signiory of the town. In this court of the Della Rovere we find art and literature flourishing in all their splendour. The famous captain, *Guy da Montefeltro* called to it artists and men of letters. There, *Castiglione* placed the scene of his dialogue in the *Cortigiano*. *Torquato Tasso*, before taking refuge in Mount Oliveto at Rome, passed through Urbino and there composed one of his most impassioned and serious lyrics. But there is no foundation for the belief that those families were noble. *Sixtus IV*, a simple Franciscan friar, made, in Chieri, the acquaintance of Christopher, one of the *Della Rovere of Vinovo*; and, as soon as he was raised to the Papacy, he began to think of how he could manage to make his nephews and himself noble. With such an aim, he called around him members of the Vinovese and Turinese family, the first to be invited being Christopher and Dominic, whom he pretended were his cousins, declaring this in solemn occasions, endowing them with riches, cardinals' hats and wealthy livings, and adopting as his coat-of-arms that of the Counts of Vinovo; namely, the *uprooted oak with gold acorns in an azure field*. To this, his nephews added the Aragonese arms granted them in 1472 by the Aragonese Kings of Naples. And Julius II did likewise. The historians, poets and flatterers of the time did the rest, completely confusing the two families - one (that of the popes) plebeian; the other (that of Vinovo) most noble - and this confusion prevailed as long as Spanish pride prevailed in Italy. After Cardinal Dominic Della Rovere, we find another, conspicuous for merits and virtue, namely, Cardinal Jerome Della Rovere, Archbishop of Turin, an illustrious Latin poet <sup>(1)</sup> and a friend of

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(1) HIERONYMI RUVEREI, *Carmina*; *Papiae*, apud Jo. Maria Simoneta Cremonens., 1540. Reprinted at Ratisbona, Sumptibus Joh. Conradi Hemmrichs, Bibliop. Typis Dalsteinianis, A. MDCLXXXIII.

many men of letters whom he protected, and especially of Bernard Tasso, the father of Torquato, with whom he studied at the University of Padua, and whom he met later at Paris, when he was acting as ambassador of the Duke of Savoy <sup>(1)</sup>. He took part in those tumultuous conclaves where the cardinals exchanged high words and blows, and in which were elected popes, the Roman Castagna (*Urban VII*, 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1590), who died thirteen days later, suspected of having been poisoned, and then the Milanese Sfondrato (*Gregory XIV*, 5<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1590). Della Rovere himself died then in Rome, and the historians of the times believe that he would have been elected pope but for the intrigues of the cardinals Madruzzi, Montalto, and Altaemps, notoriously vile. In 1515, Julian De Medici, the youngest son of Lorenzo il Magnifico, and brother of Pope Leo X, arrived in Turin with an immense train of soldiers, servants, and dependants, in order to marry Philiberta of Savoy. Not only the halls of the castle of Turin, but also those of that of Vinovo, were opened to welcome that splendid company, in which was to be found also *Piero Valeriano da Belluno*, a very elegant Latin poet, who in fine verses (*Amorum libri V*, Venice, Gab. Giolito, 1549, doc. 62, 63, 64), celebrates the event and the place with great pleasure <sup>(2)</sup>.

This family, as we have said, having become extinct, on the death of one Charles in 1692, the castle of Vinovo became part of the patrimony of the house of Savoy. And Charles Emanuel II granted it, with the inherent title of Marquis of Vinovo to Charles Francis Augustin Delle Lanze. This youth, who was later the father of Cardinal Victor Amedeus Delle Lanze, was a natural son of Duke Charles Emanuel II himself, his mother

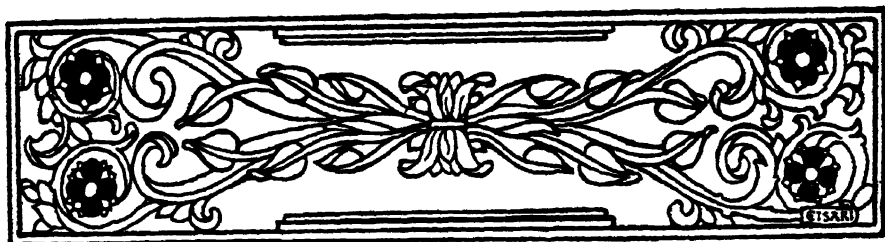
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(1) VESME ALESSANDRO, *Torquato Tasso e il Piemonte*, historical notes. Turin, Stamperia Reale, 1887, in-8°, 88 pages with an engraving.

(2) See my study, *Nuovo contributo alla vita di Piero Valeriano di Belluno*, a humanist of the first half of the XVI century, of one of whose Love Odes I have also given a translation. Milan, 1911. Printed Allegretti. (For a Wedding).

being Madam Gabrielle De Mesme de Marolles, married on Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1668, to the obliging Charles Delle Lanze, Count of Sales. Nor need we marvel at such gifts, dallyings, festivities hunting-parties, banquets and balls, when even Duchess Jane, the wife of Charles Emanuel I made no fuss about them, accustomed as she was, to the scenes of jealousy of Madam De Marolles and the Marchioness of Cavour, with whom the Duke kept up an intimate correspondence. On the death of Cardinal Delle Lanze, Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>, 1784, in the Abbey of St. Benignus, of which he was a *Commander*, this family too, became extinct. But, in 1732, the castle had already returned to the Royal patrimony; and, in 1752, Charles Emanuel III, by royal patents of July 14<sup>th</sup>, had united it to the Magistral Command of Stupinigi, by which it was granted through royal patents of Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1776, along with part of its enclosed and annexed territory to *John Victor Brodel, of Turin*, "in order to carry out experiments for the production of a good quality of pottery,,,. But only four years later, by royal patents of April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1780, the use of the castle was granted to *Dr. Victor Amedeus Gioanetti*, "the real inventor of Vinovo Porcelain,,," as we shall hereafter show. The ceramic industry having ended in Piedmont on the death of Gioanetti, on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1824, the castle was let, by the Society of Holy Religion, to one *John Stoppini*, who attempted to revive this art but in vain, as a year later we find he was obliged to leave the building, it being sold, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1825, to the University of Turin, which made of it a summer residence for the students of the College of St. Francesco da Paola, directed by the Jesuit Fathers. On Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1836, the University sold it to the city of Turin, by which, in 1839, it was granted to the Poor-House, which however could only make use of it for a year owing to its distance from the city, there not being then convenient means of communication with the capital. On sale again, in 1843, it was purchased by Messrs James and Louis Rei, the father and the uncle of its present owners, who founded there a manufactory of carpets.





## The Chemist Victor Amedeus Gioanetti.

THE fame of Dr. *Victor Amedeus Gioanetti* is founded principally on his *beautiful porcelain*.

But, before proceeding to speak of that, it will be advisable to make the acquaintance of the man, who traversed the field of Chemical science in all its amplitude when there was no chair of Chemistry in the university of Turin, and he could neither hope for help elsewhere, nor dispose of those means in which modern laboratories are rich—when indeed Chemistry was a science held in some suspicions.

This man was really self-taught, a self-made man, in the true sense of the word; and yet he seems not of those times but of ours. Among other documents of mine, lent by me formerly to the illustrious Professor Piero Giacosa of the University of Turin, I find one, which, in my turn, helps me now to give some special indications; namely, a fine “Note,, of his which he himself presented to me <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See “*Bibliography*,, at the end of the volume n. 8.



Gioanetti was born in Turin on Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>, 1729. His father, John Peter was at the head of the general tobacco agency, and was a decurion of the city. He began to study medicine in the Royal University of Turin, in 1747, taking his degree in 1751. Six years later, he was aggregated to the college of Medicine there. On that occasion, he discussed the following theses, only the titles of which have been preserved; “*De luce et coloribus*,, - “*De visu*,, - “*De sale ammoníaco*,, - *De myopía et presbyopía*,, - “*De strabismo*,,.

The only laboratories, in which it was possible, then, to carry out chemical experiments, were those of the pharmaceutical chemists, or those in the factories of chemical industries. At first, Gioanetti, who was very keen on such investigations, seems to have availed himself of some pharmaceutical works: but, later, he got possession of one himself, which he transformed into a chemical laboratory where he spent all the spare time left him by his practice in studies and research work. We only partly know what was the nature of his investigations, very few publications of his remaining to us, but his principal work in which he is entirely revealed to us, is his “*Analysis of the Minerals waters of the Val d’Aosta*,,, completed by him in 1779 <sup>(1)</sup> by request of Count Charles Francis Baldassar Perrone de San Martino, who was then at the head of foreign affairs. This Count was a man of wide culture, who, in his palace in Ivrea, had gathered together a fine collection of Roman inscriptions and antiquities, and who took delight in the study of botany. He represented the Sardinian government at London about the middle of the XVIII century, and, from there, he sent important letters to Turin, in order to arouse an interest in the novelties in English literature, and break the bonds of the narrow and stagnant society which that of Turin then was. By this work, the attention of scientists was drawn to Gioanetti,

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(1) See “*Bibliography*,,, n. 9.

and the best chemists Foucroy, Guïton de Morveau, and others paid him tributes of praise. In fact in it is revealed the mind of a chemist, well trained to solve the most difficult problems of the science which he cultivated, and one able to excogitate new and original methods.

The book contains, besides, wise and moderate medical observations on the use of the water. On the whole, on being read, even now it leaves the impression of being the work of a lucid and orderly mind, which proposes to itself clear problems and solves them rightly. It is not to be wondered at, if it was welcomed with applause by the author's contemporaries. And the greatest praise which can be tributed to him, as, an analyst, is, that the results, obtained by him, are but little discordant with those obtained through the surer methods of modern analysis.

The investigations which he carried out on behalf of private persons, and the business in the pharmaceutical works, bore good fruits. When he, in 1780, abandoned all his occupations in order to settle at *Vinovo* and dedicate himself entirely to the *manufactory of porcelain* (according to the assertion of Bonino<sup>(1)</sup> who drew this informations from an autograph memorial, no longer extant), from the laboratory he drew over three thousand lire every year, which, in those times, was a conspicuous sum. The fame of Gioanetti, as a chemist, had thus been, little by little acquiring solidity, and naturally, had made for him friends and enemies, brought him honours and calumny. In his laboratory, he gave private lessons (as he himself remarks in the note on page 52 of the volume, "*Analyse des eaux de St. Vincent*, etc.), and youths from the best families of the city took advantage of them. Besides, Perrone di San Martino, Saluzzo, and others belonging to the noble and governing class, were interested in his studies, and that group of distinguished men which Turin

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(1) See "*Bibliography* . . . , n. 2.

then boasted of, and who were united in a Scientific Society, which, in 1783 became l'*Accademia delle Scienze*, proposed to King Victor Amadeus III that a chair of Chemistry should be founded, and Gioanetti appointed to it. But that daring plan found adversaries, who represented chemistry as a dark science, to be feared as an associate of magic and alchemy, and therefore, nothing was done.

The fact was, the good doctor had made enemies, partly because of his somewhat rustic manners, partly because of his ingenuous ignorance of human intrigues, and his neglect of the respect owing to all the petty ambitions, common in the aulic Turinese surroundings. However, his rare qualities of intellect and character as well as his learning assured him of friends and protectors in that part of the same society, in which new ideas, new plans were discussed, welcomed and favoured, and in which was prepared that rising for redemption which made Piedmont the herald of Italian liberty.

The disappointments of life did not however trouble the man of science. For some time, Gioanetti had been busying himself with fossil clays and especially with those which serve to make *porcelain*. He had studied the Piedmontese minerals suitable for such a manufactory, and later, he gave an amply detailed list of them. He also cherished the idea of being able to avail himself of his knowledge to found an industry.

At first, he limited himself to *grès*, and, in 1774, he obtained permission to manufacture vases of this substance - that is, clay semi-petrified internally and externally, in the form of ordinary porcelain ("which besides their cleanness and cheap price, have the "quality of standing fire, of being impenetrable to any liquid, and "of giving no bad quality to food,,). He then began his work. Later, he gave up this privilege, obtaining in compensation for it, a pension of 600 lire a year, granted him in October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1776. Afterwards, seeing the failure of the attempts made by others, as we

shall relate further on, to found a manufactory of artistic porcelain, he, invited by the king, took over the management of this industry in the castle of *Vinovo*, and dedicated himself to it with constant and continual enthusiasm and fervour, sacrificing himself, his time, his substance. And though the undertaking was a financial disaster, it yet constituted a glorious period for *Piedmontese Ceramic Art*, the importance of which is recognized by all the historians of the subject. The rich collection in the *Museo Civico of Turin*, (ancient department) in *Via Gaudenzio Ferrari*, is the worthiest monument to the memory of Gioanetti.

This Collection comes mostly from a bequest of Marquis Robert Azeglio, who was one of the wealthiest and most intelligent collectors in Piedmont<sup>(1)</sup>.

Several of the *products of Vinovo* are incomparable for fineness of decoration, elegance of modelling, beauty of form, so that several manufactories abroad have been induced to imitate them. Such imitations however, are always easily recognized.

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(1) I am pleased here to pay a debt of gratitude. I sincerely thank the illustrious *Dott. Lorenzo Revere*, who with so much zeal and ability, directs the above-mentioned *Museo Civico*, for the friendly kindness shown to me. He placed at my disposal, the objects chosen by me to form the illustrations of this volume, which are now for the first time photographed. Open to the widest modern ideas, he considers Museums as means of instruction and education, therefore, heedless of trouble or inconvenience, he is always ready at any moment to give help to those engaged in studies. How many of the directors in Italy are like him?







## The Manufactory.

IT IS, first of all, necessary to state that, for the manufacture of the ceramic products, *Vinovo* only provided the premises, the substratum of the soil in that region, entirely a plain, in the valley of the Po, not possessing materials suitable for such a production, but only clays for bricks, used in building. Also, for the sake of clearness and order, we must divide the production of the porcelain into two distinct periods.

The *first period* extends from October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1776, to January 1780, and, in it, we have the work of John Victor Brodel of Turin, and of Peter Anthony Hannong of Strasburg.

The *second period*, which includes the work of Dr. Victor Amedeus Gioanetti, begins in April, 1780, and (calculating the interval of suspension caused by the French occupation between 1796 and September, 1814) ends on the death of Gioanetti in the castle of *Vinovo* itself, on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1815.

One John Lomello, employed in the manufactory, took it into his head to try and carry on the production; but the results of this attempt were quite negative.

By now, Tamietti is dead and around him remain John Cassardi, a turner, Michael Carasso, an architect and painter, John Forneris, Michael Barberis and Chiriotti, all, except Carasso, as insignificant as artists, as their productions were.

## FIRST PERIOD:

John Victor Brodel of Turin, and the Marquis Laurence Birago San Martino, count of *Vische* formed in 1765 a society, in order to found a manufactory of porcelain. The castle of *Vische*, belonging to Birago, was the site chosen; and the King, by Royal Patents of August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1765, granted them a monopoly for twenty years, along with exemption from every kind of tax. But fortune did not smile on the undertaking, and Brodel separated from Birago, resolving however, to carry on the enterprise, elsewhere, on his own account. The productions of *Vische* are known to us only through a few rare specimens; they seem, however to be without importance.

\* \* \*

Brodel called to his assistance Peter Anthony *Hannong*, the son of that Charles Francis Hannong, who, in 1709, founded one celebrated manufactory of majolica at Strasburg and another at Hagenay, both in Alsatia; and the brother of that Paul Anthony who, at Strasburg, initiated the manufacture of hard porcelain, into the decoration of which he introduced the purple of Cassius, and who, in 1744 discovered the means of applying gold to his most elegant enamels.

Peter Hannong, therefore, came from a first-class laboratory, the fame of which had already spread through the principal states of Europe,

and he gave Brodel good hopes of succeeding in his new undertaking. Brodel, having obtained permission from the king to carry out his experiments in *the castle of Vinovo*, and both he and Hannong being pleased with the results of those, they, together, requested the king for a renewal of the privileges already conceded for Vische, along with others greater, for a period of 20 years, and this was granted them by Royal Patents on Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1776. The *patronage* of the king was, then, granted to the manufactory which was allowed to place the *Royal Arms* on the entrance, and to dress the porter in the dress and bandolier of the royal livery. Besides, “*His Majesty wishes that to all the pieces of porcelain there be applied the letter V and a cross of a blue colour along with a NUMBER, in order to distinguish the different qualities of the said pieces,,*”

“*This manufactory is for porcelain of every kind whether painted or not, gilt or not gilt, mixed or in relief, sculptured or flowered,,*” Among minor privileges, others greater are granted, as for example: *exemption* from all taxes of egress, transit and transport by water, for the products of the works, and from all duty and customs or *gabelle*, on the *colours, utensils and clays*, coming from the *various places and provinces of the Royal States*, and necessary to the manufacture of the porcelain, as well as the right to have the necessary clays and coal searched for and excavated in the lands of anyone whomsoever, on paying an adequate compensation. The workmen were obliged, before the President of the Consulate, to swear to keep secret all the operations concerning the said manufacture, and those, who were admitted to the various compositions and secrets, were forbidden to abandon their service without the permission of the king while all the others had to give three months’ warning, if meaning to leave the place. The products were satisfactory, the public favoured them, and therefore, the two manufacturers concluded a legal act of partnership on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1776, full of hope in the result of their undertaking.



The names of the artistic workers which we find, are:

MODELLERS: John Maurice *Mirbello* and Charles *Tamietti*, the latter being an artist of great worth, being also a very able copper-engraver and designer.

TURNERS: *Coquard*, Michael *Farinel*, *Habisreutinger*, Ignatius *Icardi*, *Polícardi*, and G. B. *Rena*.

DECORATORS: Joseph *Barbapiccola*, John *Odello*, James *Piscia*, and Laurence *Vattaneo*.

PAINTERS: George *Balbo*, Michael *Carasso*, (who sometimes signed simply *CA*), an architect, Charles *Fuerer*, *Hocseanch*, George *Hornung*, *L. Ch. Bosco* (who sometimes signed *L. Ch. B.* or *L. Ch. Bo.*, or simply *Charles*), and *Barberis*, for the majolica.

REPAIRERS: Louis *Mia*, Charles *Richer*.

As the reader sees from this list of the principal artificers, no fewer than seven of them were foreigners, whom Hannong had certainly brought with him, at the total expense of Brodel, who had formerly borne the greatest weight of the Vische undertaking. We must, therefore, admire the latter for his spirit of abnegation, his constancy in following out his ideal, and his firm faith in the future of the porcelain industry.

THE PRODUCTS of Brodel and Hannong consisted in *pieces to be used as ornaments* in dwelling-houses, and in *table-services*. We find indications about those products, from a fascicle, which has already furnished us with useful information, and which was saved from the fire that, on the night between the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> January 1817, almost completely destroyed the archives of the Commune of Vinovo, and is now in possession of the *museo Civico* of Turin. They consisted in:

*Inkstands* both white and gilt.

*Perforated table-baskets*, painted yellow.

*Single figures and Groups*, with and without varnish, both white and coloured, representing Minerva, on a pedestal, other mythological figures, the four seasons, saints, busts, oval medallions representing Roman Emperors, Pius VI (Papa Braschi), pastoral groups, deer, chained dogs, etc.

*Knife-handles.*

*Barrel-formed mustard-pots.*

*Complete Dinner-services*, plates, soup-plates, tureens, etc.

*Tea-and coffee-sets.*

*Bowls* of various dimensions, with and without lids or *plates*, white and painted.

*Cups* of different sizes and forms, round and square, with and without lids, with relative sugar-bowl, coffee-pot, milk-jug, decorated with bunches of roses, with golden spots and other ornaments, and grecques in gold, landscapes in purple with gold outlines, blue waving ribbons and garlands of flowers with small golden key-patterns of a violet colour, and garlands of grey flowers outlined in gold. Others have birds with gilt outlines and series of ornaments of fish-scales, in purple with a double, gilt edge.

*Vases* in *Biscuit*, varnished and painted with flowers; with medallions, gilt edges, goats' heads, etc. having a pedestal, either fixed or movable. And they represent the *rarest specimens of this second period*.

The decoration of *violet-coloured roses*, graceful and flowing, like those of Strasburg, belong to this period of Hannong. This *rose* must not be confused with Dr. Gioanetti's, which are of natural colours; an able chemist, as he was, having no need to substitute the real colours of the flower with others unreal.

As we have seen, this Society was formed on October 26<sup>th</sup> 1776, *but it only lasted three years and a half*; dissension having arisen from the very beginning, between the two partners, with the rela-

tive consequences; cessation of harmony of ideas, less care in the work, less production, decrease of proceeds, debts and, at last the dissolution of the Society. Hannong took over all the business, undertaking to pay all the debts contracted in partnership, and to pay back to Brodel little by little, his share in the concern. He, however, had failed to calculate his resources correctly and did not realize what a burden he was thus taking upon his shoulders. The fact is, he had always shown himself to be eccentric, irresponsible, inconstant, ever since his father Paul Anthony's death, in 1760, when the manufactory of Frankenthal had passed into the hands of his elder brother, Joseph Adam, while, unfortunately, those of Hagunau and Strasburg fell into his, Peter Antony's who was the younger brother.

His great talent was not compensation enough for the many faults of his character. A born artist, he was an enemy of all calculations and industrial speculations. A sufficient proof of this is, that he sold the secret of his porcelain to Sèvres, without ascertaining what might be the effects of his bargain, thus being deceived and obliged to give up his works and wander about, in attempts to draw profit from his knowledge, in order to gain a living.

Hannong was in such conditions when he accepted the offer of Brodel, and came to Vinovo, bringing with him his principal defects which were to exceed his good qualities. The manufactory, therefore, left completely in his hands, could not but come to an unsatisfactory end.

In fact, in January, 1780, the King ordered that it should be closed, and all the furniture and the goods in the place were sold by auction.

This Manufactory, as we learn from a note in manuscript by Donaudo delle Molière, had already cost the king the sum of three hundred thousand *lire* <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See "*Bibliography*", n. 5.

## SECOND PERIOD:

But four months had not passed before the Manufactory of Vinovo re-opened its doors to new productions of real worth and greater fame, under the auspices of the chemist, *Victor Amedeus Gioanetti*, of whom we have already given ample information.

This scientist, in an ample "*Report*," to the King, gave an account of the studies he had carried out on the lands in H.M.'s states, and of the results he had obtained for the manufacture of a *good hard porcelain*, and requested that he might avail himself of the castle of Vinovo, to effect such a manufacture. And the King, with Royal Patents, dated April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1780, granted him full powers for this, along with the use of the walled garden, annexed to the castle, and of the water-canal which surrounds two sides of it, and was suitable as motive power for the millstones, used for pulverizing the raw materials. *He also renewed in his favour all the privileges* formerly granted to Brodel and Hannong. We have no information concerning the agreement come to, between Dr. Gioanetti and Hannong or Brodel, the creditor of the latter, or with the mass of creditors, about the taking-over of the utensils, machines, models, etc. Very probably Gioanetti took into his employment the workmen and the artists who had been in the service of Brodel and Hannong. We know, however, that the afore-mentioned *Tamietti*, a learned, and exquisite modeller, and a perfect artist, was with him, and remained in Gioanetti's employment till his death in 1796. With him, too, was the excellent painter *Carpano*, one of whose pieces we reproduce in Plate X. In the meanwhile, Gioanetti fixed his abode in Vinovo, where he transported his chemical laboratory, and dedicated himself, body and soul, to the development of his ideals.

Carena, speaking of Gioanetti's work, says as follows; "This illustrious chemist had two singular advantages over those who had preceded him; the first being, that he had found the best clays for

the *manufacture of porcelain in the Royal States* themselves; the second, that being a most expert chemist, he was able with greater ease and in a shorter time, to attain to those results in the manipulation of the clays, on which the success of the porcelain mostly depends,,.

“In fact, in a very short time, beautiful pieces of this porcelain were to be seen in the royal halls and in the houses of the great and, in general, there was a great demand for it, because, owing to its intrinsic qualities, Gioanetti’s porcelain had, perhaps, nothing superior to it in Europe. Suffice it to say that, besides bearing, without breaking, the greatest and the most rapid alternations of cold and heat, *it is so difficult to melt, that a cup of this manufacture can be used as a crucible for most of the porcelain in Europe*,,. Another quality in it is also noteworthy; namely, that the external layer, even after long use, shows no sign of those cracks and flaws, which are never seen in real China ware, but which are very common in European porcelains. The having taken away this defect, means having found for the layer such material as possesses a certain grade of fusibility, included in very narrow limits and therefore not easily found- a material, which becomes one with the porcelain; and that both, though more or less heterogeneous with each other, have yet a uniformity of expansion and contraction, under the various degrees of heat.

According to Carena, “Gioanetti was reluctant to communicate his secrets and jealous of his rare knowledge and useful discoveries. With severe constancy, he always refused to give the result of his studies to the public,,. Carena gives us the description of twenty-one kinds of clay and earth in Piedmont, in a list obtained from Gioanetti himself, who, however, had refused to communicate to him the proportion of those, used in his porcelain.

During the French dominion, however, the manufactory of Gioanetti, still carrying on its work, attracted the attention of the French Government, which, perhaps fearing a competition with Sèvres,

demanded from Gioanetti a list of the materials used for his porcelain. And, in 1807, *Brogniart* received from the chemist the formula of his composition, which he inserted into his *Traité des arts céramiques*.

It is as follows:

*Magnésite* ou silicate de *Magnésie* de *Baldissero* (Piemonte);  
*Argile* de *Barge* (Piemonte, province de *Cuneo*) qui est un  
*Kaölin* très talqueux;  
*Feldspath* de *Frossasco* (Piemonte);  
*Talc* blanc fibreux (abandonné par la suite);  
*Quars* de *Cumiana* (Piemonte).

Sur 100 parties:

<i>Magnésite</i> de <i>Baldissero</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	28
<i>Argile</i> de <i>Barge</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	9
<i>Feldspath</i> de <i>Frossasco</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
<i>Quars</i> de <i>Cumiana</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	28
<i>Téssons</i> de porcelaine cuite ne refermant que 10 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>0</sub> de <i>magnésie</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	28
							100

We do not find, however, that either *Brogniart* or anyone else tried the experiment with these data; and, besides, the same elements in the hands of one chemist may give results very different from what they would give in the hands of another. Besides, as a curiosity, I may relate what was told me in my youth by two old men of the village; namely, that *Gioanetti* had white stones gathered from the clean gravel of the torrent *Chisòla*, which flows quite near the village, and that those stones, first calcined and then ground, became one of the elements of the porcelain paste, being perhaps a very good substitute, and cheaper than one of the elements in the above formula.

The ever-increasing financial difficulties against which *Gioanetti* had a daily struggle and in which he consumed his substance, in a period in which the king was hindered by political events from keeping his promises, little by little, brought his enterprise to an end.

He had recourse to credit, and in June 1784, published a *Prospectus on the establishing of shares in favour of the Royal Manufactory of Vinovo Porcelain*, the shares being two thousand, at 24 lire each. The exact result of this speculation is not known. The worth of each share was to be given back in six years, that is one sixth every year, along with the interest of 12 per cent., either in money or in porcelain according to the desire of the shareholders, and at market prices. From memorials in the Royal Archives of the State, we learn that a considerable number of the shares were taken over. From the Registers of the *Reale Accademia delle Scienze* we see that this institute took twelve of them. But the critical conditions of the State, which, shortly after, was to fall under the dominion of the French Republic, the depreciation of money, the necessity of paying high prices to able workmen, partly foreigners, the special circumstances which made it difficult in such times of poverty and trouble to find a sale for the products which were chiefly articles of luxury, were all elements which contributed to the failure of the magnificent enterprise. Gioanetti, whose mind was tempered to the difficulties both of science and life, struggled on with all his strength but without illusions. This is proved by the inscription, written by his own hand, under a vase, which he presented to his friend, Count Ghiliossi di Lemie, who was to be one of his biographers. The inscription runs as follows:

*“Proh! dolor! - Puella mihi carissima - Patris ad instar - Dotis defectu - Sine liberis - Morieris,, - “Ah! Woe! Maid - very dear to me as to a father - for want of a dowry - thou without children-shalt die,,.* Thus he prophesied the death of his dreams, of his high ideals. On the return of the House of Savoy to Piedmont, Gioanetti was still earnestly intent on his manufactory at Vinovo, and the king paid him a visit in 1815, ordering from him some vases for the Royal palaces. But, bowed down with years and moral and physical fatigue, on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> of that same year, he abandoned this

life, to the sincere regret of all those who had drawn near him and known him.

GIOANETTI'S PRODUCTS of (*hard*) Porcelain are many and varied. *Busts* of philosophers, men of science, Roman emperors and empresses, famous personages, in biscuit, or with white varnish. Round and oval *medallions* in biscuit or varnished in white.

*Statues* and *Groups* of mythological figures, in the style of Capodimonte, or representing Roman emperors on horseback, in biscuit, or varnished white.

*Small statues like those of Dresda* but with a special, very clear character of their own, in biscuit or varnished white.

*Tiny statues which reproduce Piedmontese customs*, as the Chimney-sweeper, the Hurdy-Gurdy Player, etc. all full of sentiment, - with white varnish, coloured, and also in biscuit.

*Candlesticks* and *bases* of fine form, decorated in gold and with flowers.

*Dinner-Services* (now rarely complete) in white, decorated in gold, with rural or hunting subjects, *monochrome*; with garlands of tiny flowers, executed with the greatest care; now in various colours, now in one, now in gold; with medallions of mythological subjects, painted in colours. *Coffee - and Tea-sets* (also rarely complete now) adorned with the arms of nobles, or with medallions - portraits of princes and important personages, executed very finely and with great taste.

THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS of this production are, therefore: first of all, a *perfect report* of expansion and contraction between the *paste and the varnish*, which makes this porcelain tetragon to the rapid transitions from the highest to the lowest temperature. Paste and varnish clearer, purer, whiter than in the preceding period. Very fluid varnishes, the purest of colours, fluid, not felt on being touched by the fingers and perfectly applied; shining or opaque



gold, applied with equal perfection; cobalt blue of a surprising purity, never attained by any other chemist, which we find in certain coffee-sets of a very simple form, decorated with simple corn-flowers; a quite special monochrome decoration (subjects or medallions) in the most delicate of colours pale-rose, brick-red, violet, rusty sepia, or black: the very fine execution of the miniature on certain cups, as we have already indicated, the constant sobriety and elegance of the form, in which every pompous style is avoided, the perfect classical modelling of the busts, statuettes, and groups, the fine taste in each object. And, by the way, let us observe that the violet-coloured rose belongs to the period of Hannong, while Gioanetti's roses are of a natural colour, as we have already mentioned on page 27.

From this, it appears that though the chemical branch was under the direction of *Gioanetti*, the artistic part was carried on under *Tamietti*. The genius of science and the genius of art had joined hands to tread together the same way - a rough way, indeed, but that of the highest ideals.

THE POTTERS' MARKS: those continue to be the marks which Brodel and Hannong were ordered to use by the Royal patents of Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1776, and which were renewed for Dr. Gioanetti: namely,  $\overset{+}{V}.\overset{+}{V}.\overset{+}{V}_{D.G}$  (initials signifyng *Dr. Gioanetti*),  $\overset{+}{V}$ , accompanied by the artist's name. The V indicates *Vinovo*, and the sign  $\overset{+}{\text{}}$  stands for the cross of Savoy. Those marks are blue under varnish, or white, engraved in the paste; gold is used when the pieces are *de luxe*, or for the Royal House, etc.

At the end of the volume we give four PLATES OF POTTERS' MARKS, all copied from *the originals*, which will be an excellent guide for the reader in making comparisons.



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## ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE VOLUME

A) THE CASTLE OF VINOVO, the seat of the Ceramic Manufactory, seen from the north side

B) COURT-YARD OF THE CASTLE, with *terre-cotte*.

C) DETAILS of the entablature and arches of the court-yard.

D) PORTRAIT of the chemist VICTOR AMEDEUS GIOANETTI (From the vol. of MODESTO PAROLETTI, "Lives and Portraits of 60 Illustrions Piedmontese").

PLATE I. — Contains six specimens of the *corn flower* decoration, scattered or with their relative green leaves, characteristic of this manufactory.

PLATE II. — n. 1823. Cup and saucer decorated with the ruins of a castle and landscape, in black; n. 1821. Cup and saucer with violet roses and green leaves; n. 1840. Specimen of decoration of *corn-flowers* and green leaves; n. 1858. A bowl for an invalid with elegant barocco handles, decorated with *corn-flowers* and green leaves.

PLATE III. — n. 1807. A two - handled cup and saucer, decorated with a violet rose, a yellow marguerite, and green leaves; n. 1814. Cup and saucer decorated with roses and green leaves; n. 1232. Plate decorated with ornamental designs, round a Cupid in the centre - coloured.

PLATE IV. — n. 1808. Cup and saucer with a violet decoration; n. 1803. Cup and saucer, decorated with roses and other flowers in natural colours; n. 1862. Cup and saucer with ornamental designs on the edges, along with small medallions in violet, the body being adorned with a blue gold-flecked net. A *piece de luxe*.

PLATE V. — n. 1863. Cup and saucer with an elegant, Raphaellesque decoration in violet; n. 1797. Cup and saucer with decoration of birds in their natural colours; n. 1860. Cup with Raphaellesque ornaments, in different colours. — *At the side*: An elegant plate decorated with a gold net divided into six parts by blue stripes and with a rosette in the centre.

PLATE VI. — n. 1838. Plate with small flowers in natural colours and blue and gold borders; n. 1798. Sugar-bowl, with violet-coloured landscape; n. 1736. Oval salt-dish, with de-

corations of ribbands, knots, and garlands of flowers in natural colours; n. 1839. Plate with decorations of blue and gold ribbons and garlands with violet-coloured roses in the centre; n. 1735. Vase for perfumes decorated with a violet-coloured rose, other flowers and green leaves.

PLATE VII. — n. 1726. Plate with indented edges with a violet-coloured rose, scattered flowers and green leaves; n. 1969. A cup or mug with saucer, decoration in gold with black medallions. (Part of a set, still complete); n. 1698. Two-handled cup, decorated with roses and gold; n. 1727. An oblong plate, modelled, and curved at the corners, with scattered flowers of different colours; n. 1847. Inkstand, decorated with a violet-coloured rose.

PLATE VIII. — n. 1575. A two-handled cup with a characteristic deep saucer. Decoration, garlands of coloured flowers; n. 1783. Two-handled cup and saucer; decoration of birds in natural colours; n. 2128. An invalid's bowl, with gilt handles decorated with flowers and ribbons, and landscapes on the lid, painted in a reddish sepia colour in *cameau*; n. 1865. Invalid's bowl, with lid and plate, decorated with coloured ribbons and roses.

PLATE IX. — n. 1869. Salt-cellar, in the form of a ship, with green and gold ornaments; n. 2062. Salt-cellar, decorated with bunches of roses (a very good imitation of *Sèvres*); n. 1868. Double salt-cellar, grooved with decoration of various colours.

PLATE X. — Patterns of sets made on purpose for the *House of Savoy*; n. 1962. Bowl from King Victor Amadeus's Lunch-Service. Coffee cup, saucer with the Royal Arms. Decoration in gold, and, also in gold, Gioanetti's trade-mark; n. 1836. Egg-shaped milk-jug, with the portrait of the afore-mentioned king. Decoration *de luxe*. Signed CARPANO F.; n. 1964. Cup with a rich golden edge and coat-of-arms in colours. *Above*: A toilet jar decorated with a trophy of arms.

PLATE XI. — n. 1781. A round soup-tureen with lid, barocco handles, elegant, and decorated with bunches of roses and flowers and leaves of a natural colours; n. 1707. A plate, moulded, decorated with a rose, other flowers, cherries and a butterfly in natural colours.

PLATE XII. — n. 1744. A Soup tureen with barocco modelling; decoration, bunches of roses, flowers and leaves in natural colours; n. 1722. Plate and vase in form of a beaker, decorated with a violet-coloured Strasburg rose, yellow, blue, and red flowers and green leaves.

PLATE XIII. — n. 1475. Plate with barocco edge (waved and indented) imitation Chinese decoration graceful style, in colours with signature, CAR. (Carasso, or rather, Carpano?); n. 1828; Flower-pot with handles, decorated with bunches of roses and other coloured flowers.

PLATE XIV. — n. 1866. A very elegant barocco tureen with plate: the handles of the tureen are two knots of ribbon, the decoration, garlands of flowers and scattered blossoms in their real colours.

PLATE XV. — n. 1831. Jug with decoration of ribbons, and garlands of flowers, in various colours, and in gold; n. 1874. Jug, decorated with ornaments, representing golden lace, blue ribbons and roses in natural colours, very elegant. Two candlesticks, one larger than the other. Style Louis XVI.

PLATE XVI. — n. 1963. Vase with handles representing lions' heads in opaque gold, the neck and foot having ornamental designs in green; wreaths of golden flowers, a medallion in cobalt blue, *de luxe*; n. 1843. Vase with handles representing lions' heads in opaque gold and garlands of roses and other flowers in their real colours; n. 1852. Vase with mascherons of goats' heads, in a life-like grey, and a medallion with a Cupid sustained by ribbons of a violet colour; n. 1981. A vase marbled in a most natural way with a lid and mascherons representing goats' heads (There is a pair of these and they are two very rare pieces).

PLATE XVII. — Nine medallions in "*biscuit*" representing personages of the HOUSE OF

SAVOY, except the central one in the first row, where we have the portrait of Marquis CHARLES GINORI, a Florentine Senator and the founder of the Porcelain Manufactory of Doccia. PLATES XVIII and XIX. — Ten busts in "*biscuit*" of Roman Emperors and personages of ancient times. (They form part of a rich series, marvellously executed).

PLATE XX. — Three small statuettes in "*biscuit*" of splendid workmanship resembling those, - known as "*Tanagra*" a helmeted Minerva, Italy bearing a tower on her head - A Muse.

PLATE XXI. — Four groups of exquisite workmanship: n. 1882. Prometheus having stolen fire from the sun, chained by the gods to Caucasus, a vulture continually gnawing his heart, in "*biscuit*"; n. 1410. Venus risen from the waves, in "*biscuit*"; n. 1917. The Emperor Marck Aurelius, on horseback, a piece in white with very fluid varnish.

PLATE XXII. — Three statuettes: n. 2045. Vulcan forging arms for the gods, in "*biscuit*"; n. 1884. Minerva on an elegant pedestal; a very fine piece in coloured varnish; n. 1880. Marius, begging among the ruins of Carthage, "*biscuit*".

PLATE XXIII. — n. 2047. Group, Astronomy; n. 1909. Group, Sculpture, both in "*biscuit*"; forming part of a series "The Arts and Sciences"; 1920. Maiden with flowers in coloured varnish; n. 1573. Girl, with a basket of fruit in coloured varnish.

PLATE XXIV. — Four groups: n. 1881. Woman selling birds, a piece in white with fluid varnish; n. 1888; a woman selling melons, a piece in white with fluid varnish; n. 1902 A barrel-organ player, in "*biscuit*" (representative of a series of costumes, executed in "*biscuit*" and also in coloured varnish). A group of three figures: St. Joseph and St. Anna teaching the Virgin Mary to read, in "*biscuit*".

PLATE XXV. — Four Statues in colours. with varnish; n. 1962. The artisans; n. 1949. Child holding a vase (Saxony type); n. 1445 Chimney-sweep (representative of a series of costumes also carried out in *biscuit*).

PLATE XXVI. — n. 1974. Mary Magdalen, in "*biscuit*".

PLATES XXVII-XXVIII-XXIX-XXX (the last). — *Potters' marks*, generally of a cobalt-blue colour, to indicate place and decorators; and, in gold, on special pieces of greater importance; the modellers and retouchers, instead, engraved their sign in the paste as was done also to indicate the class and series of the piece. The marks, reproduced have all a manuscript number at the bottom, corresponding to the numbering of the pieces in the "Museo Civico in Turin," (Department "*Ancient Art*" in Gaudenzio Ferrari Street). Those marks are in alphabetical order AND ARE ALL COPIED FROM THE ORIGINALS.

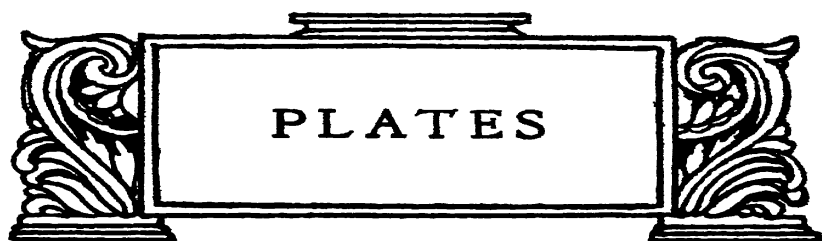




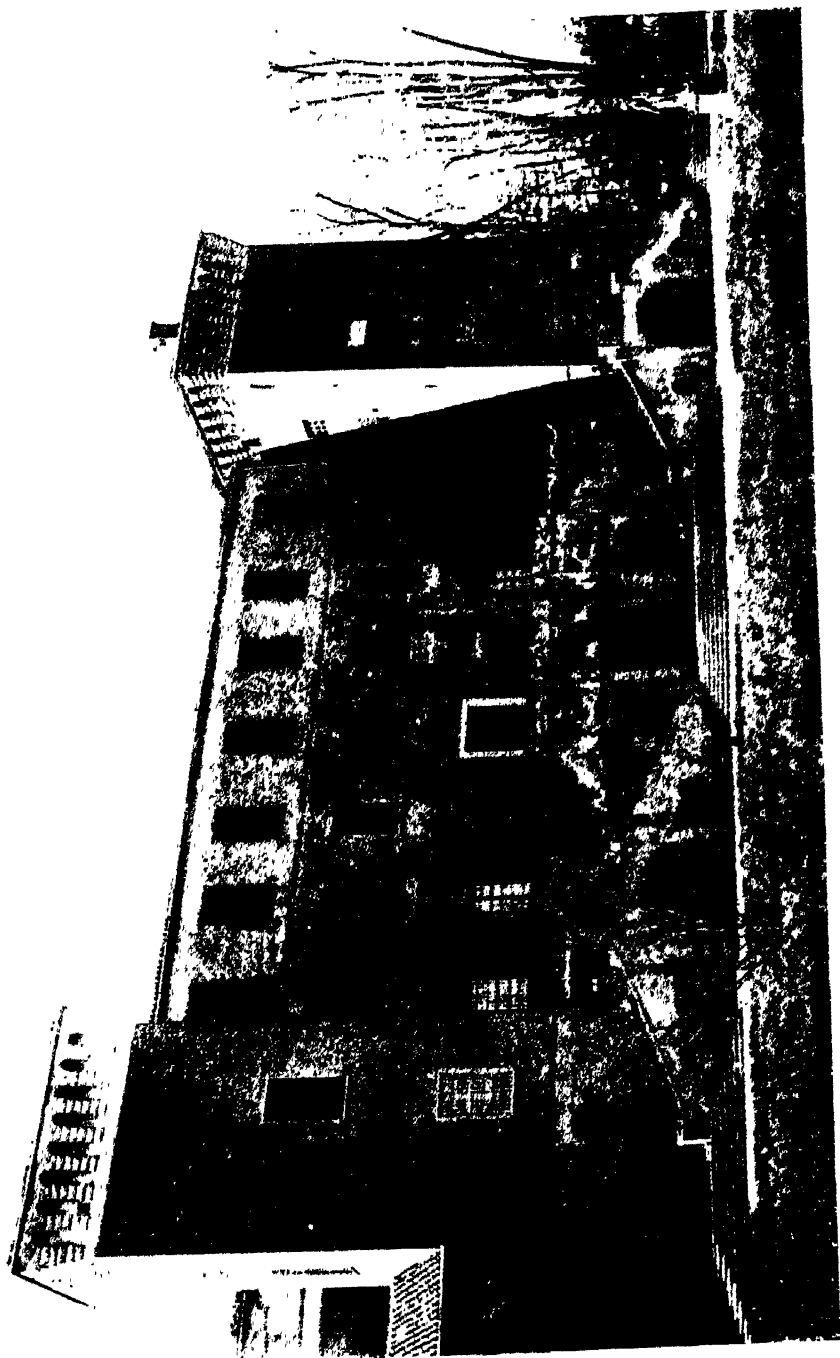
















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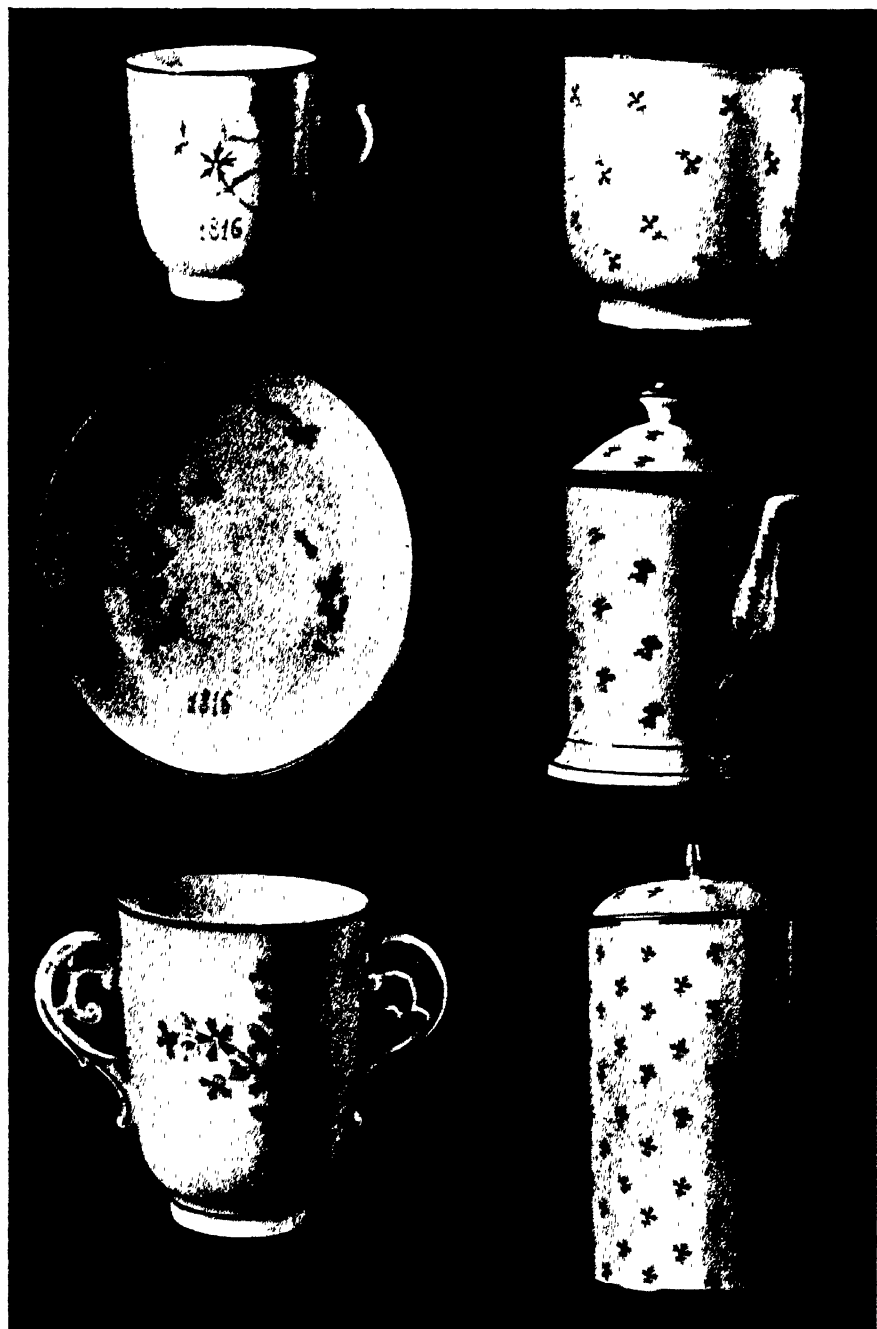




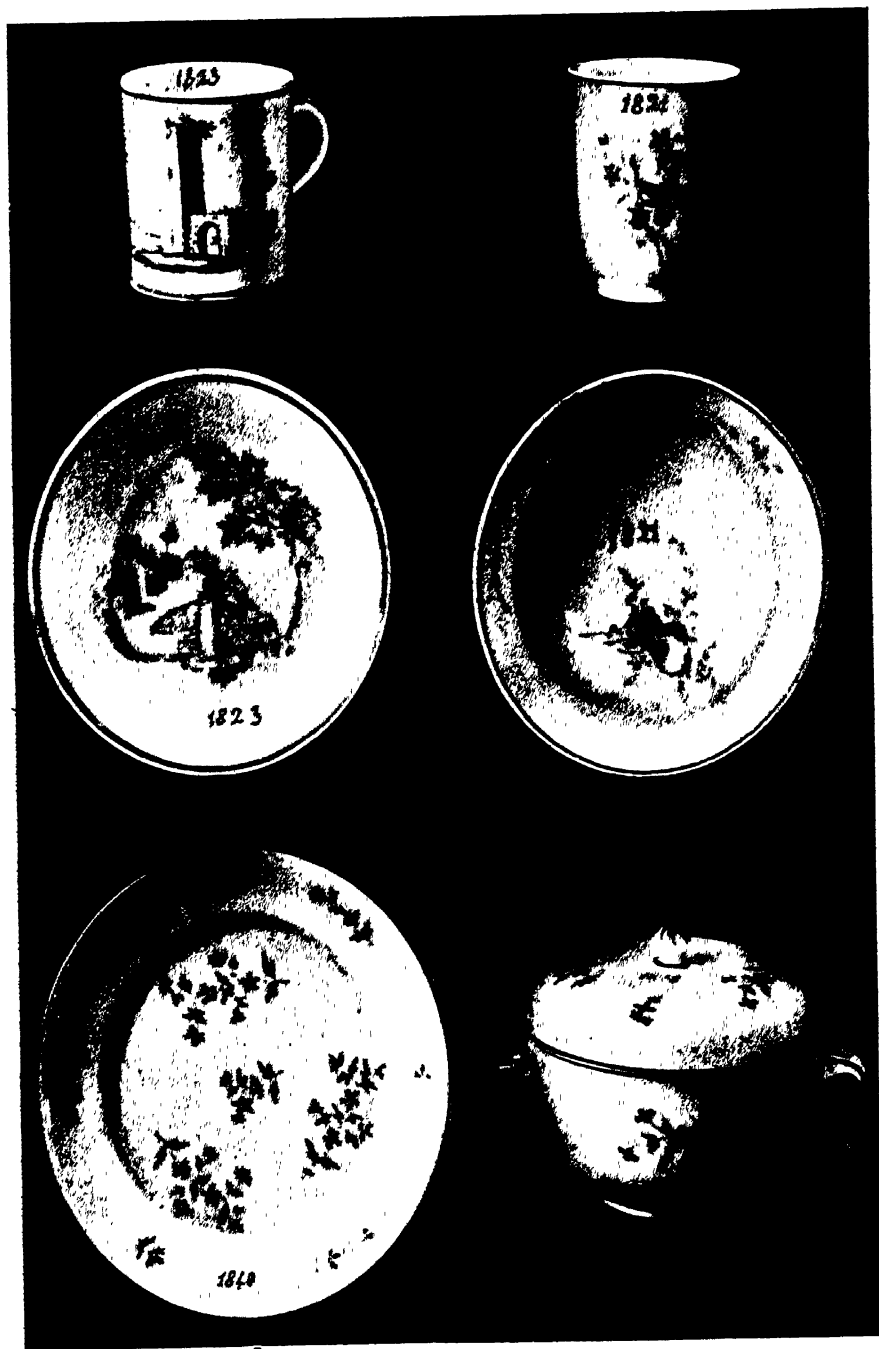










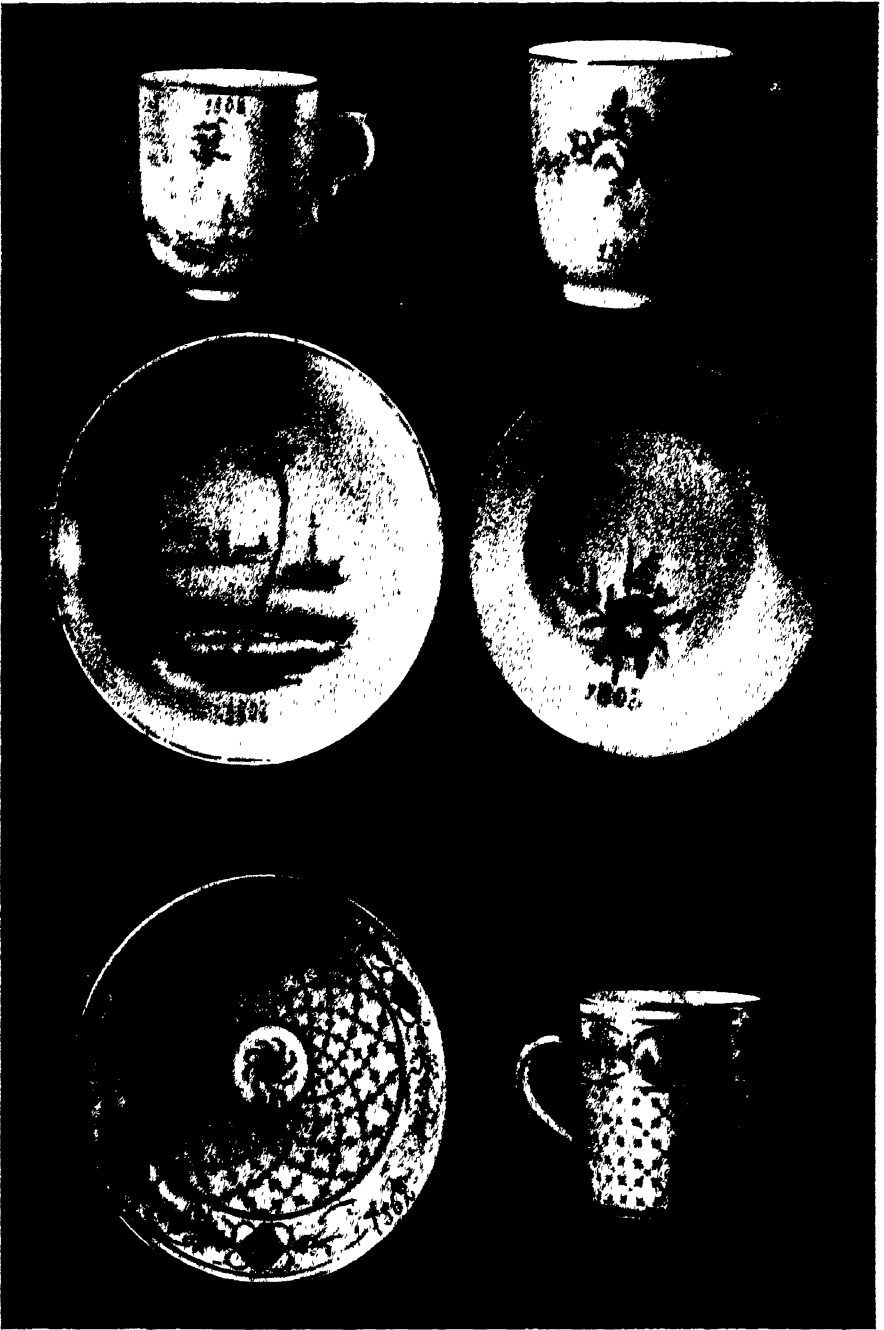




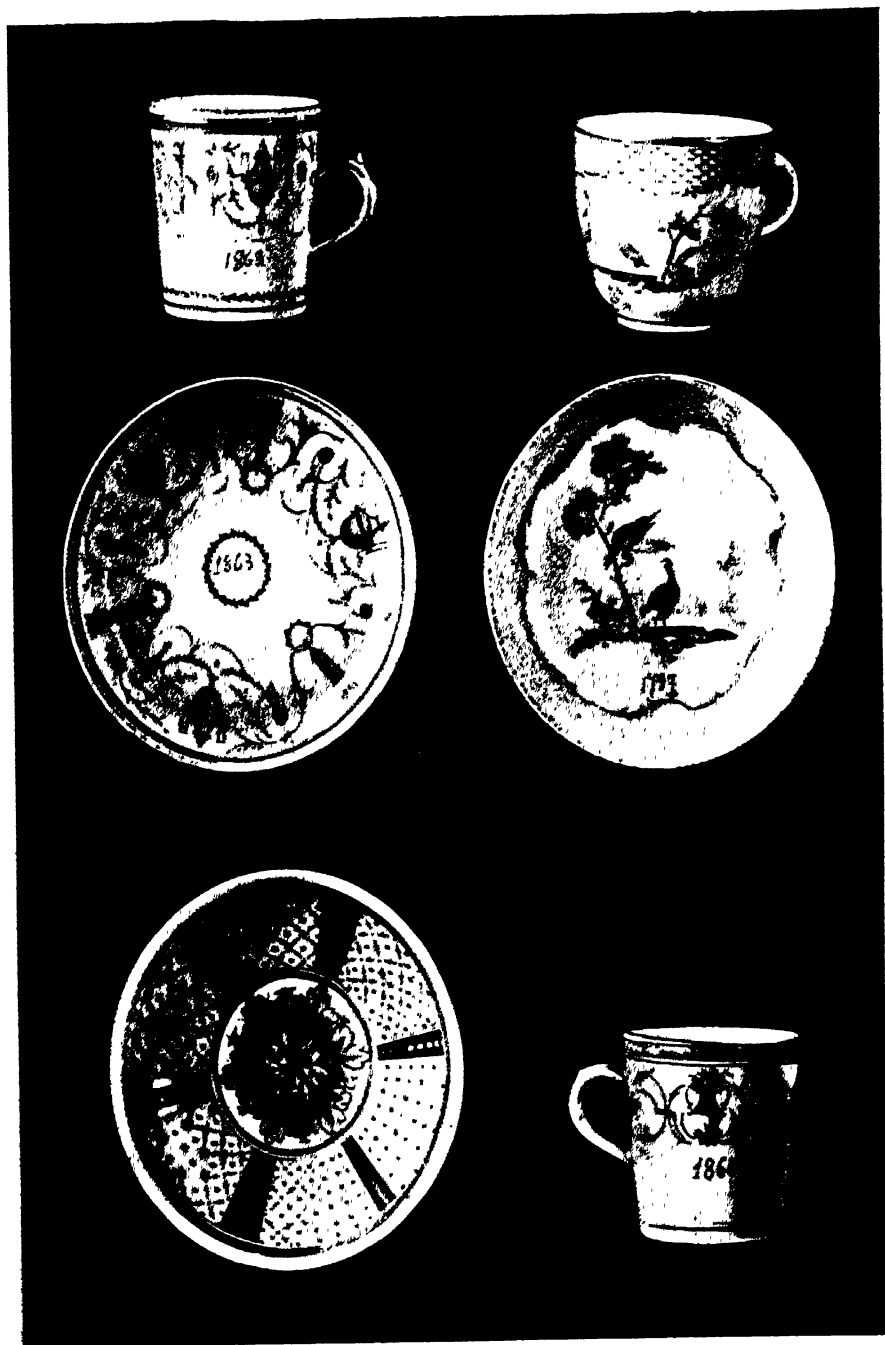




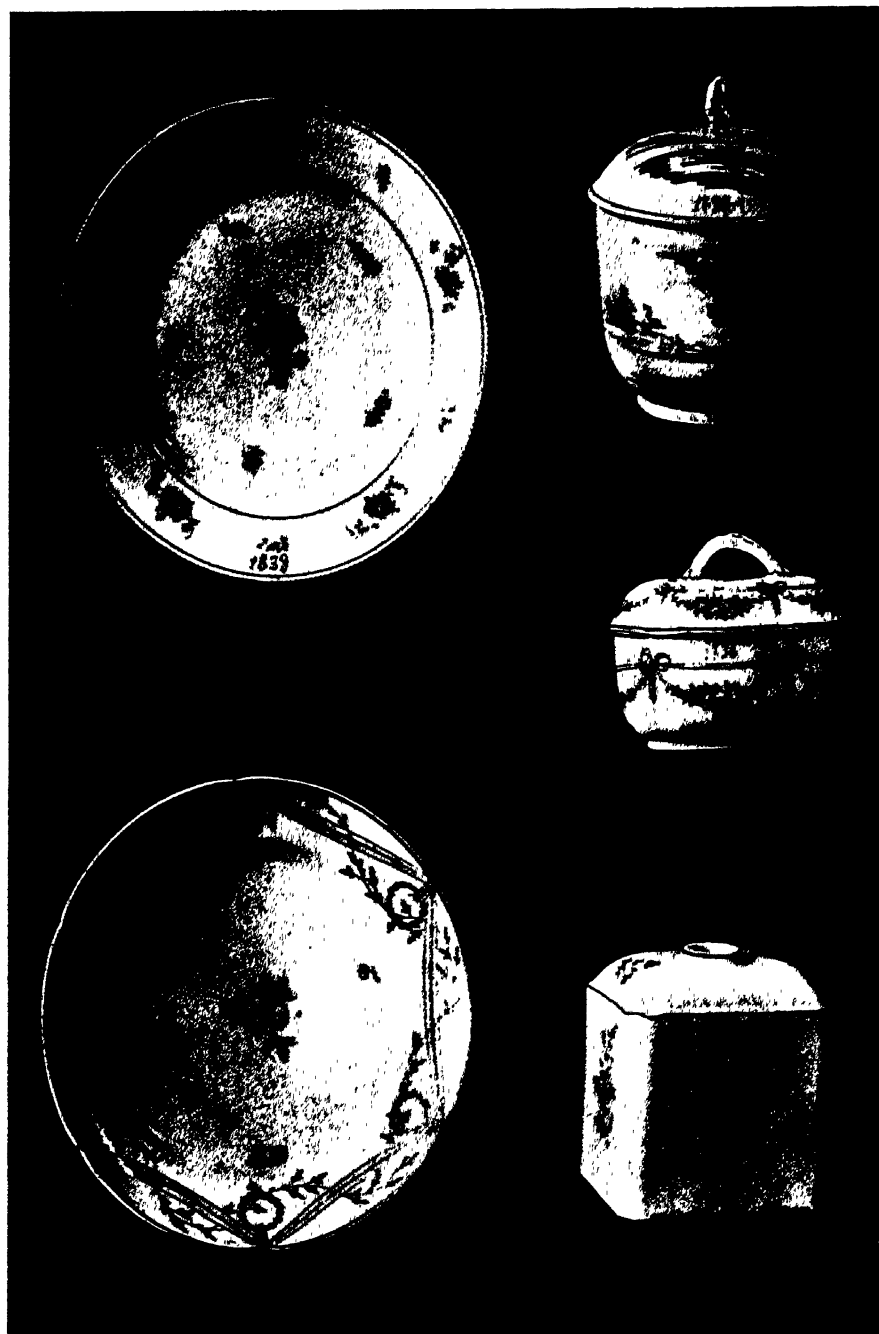




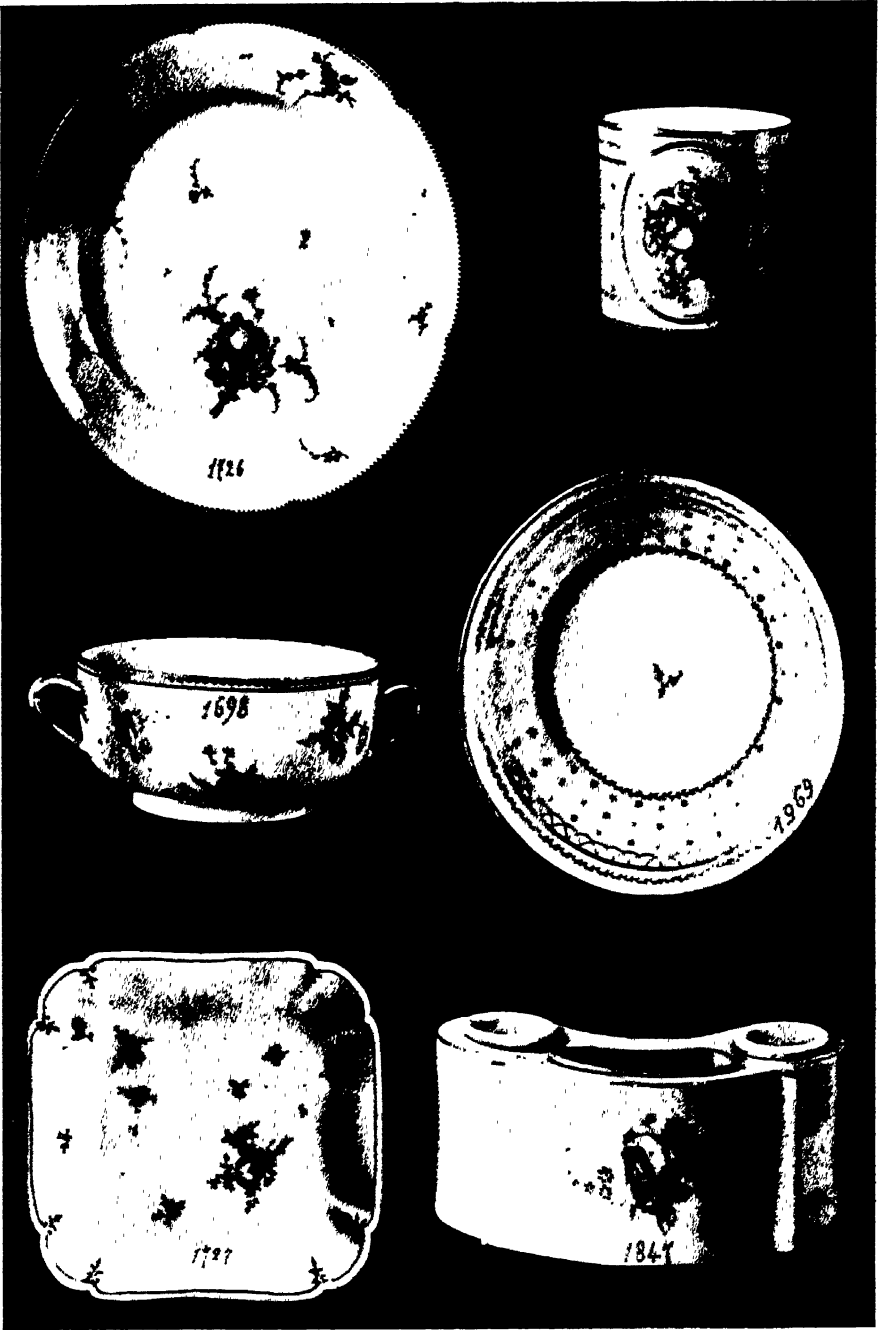




































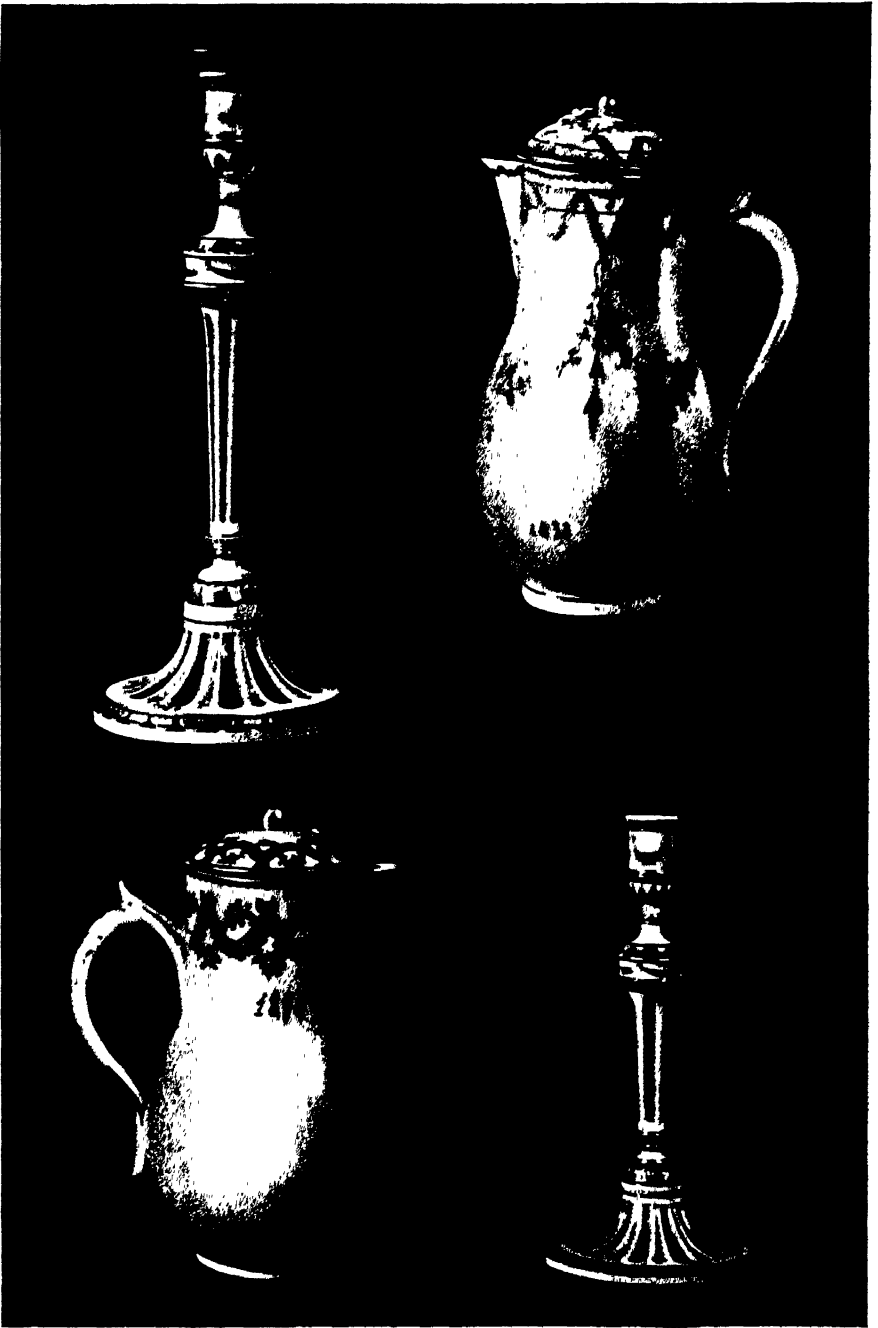






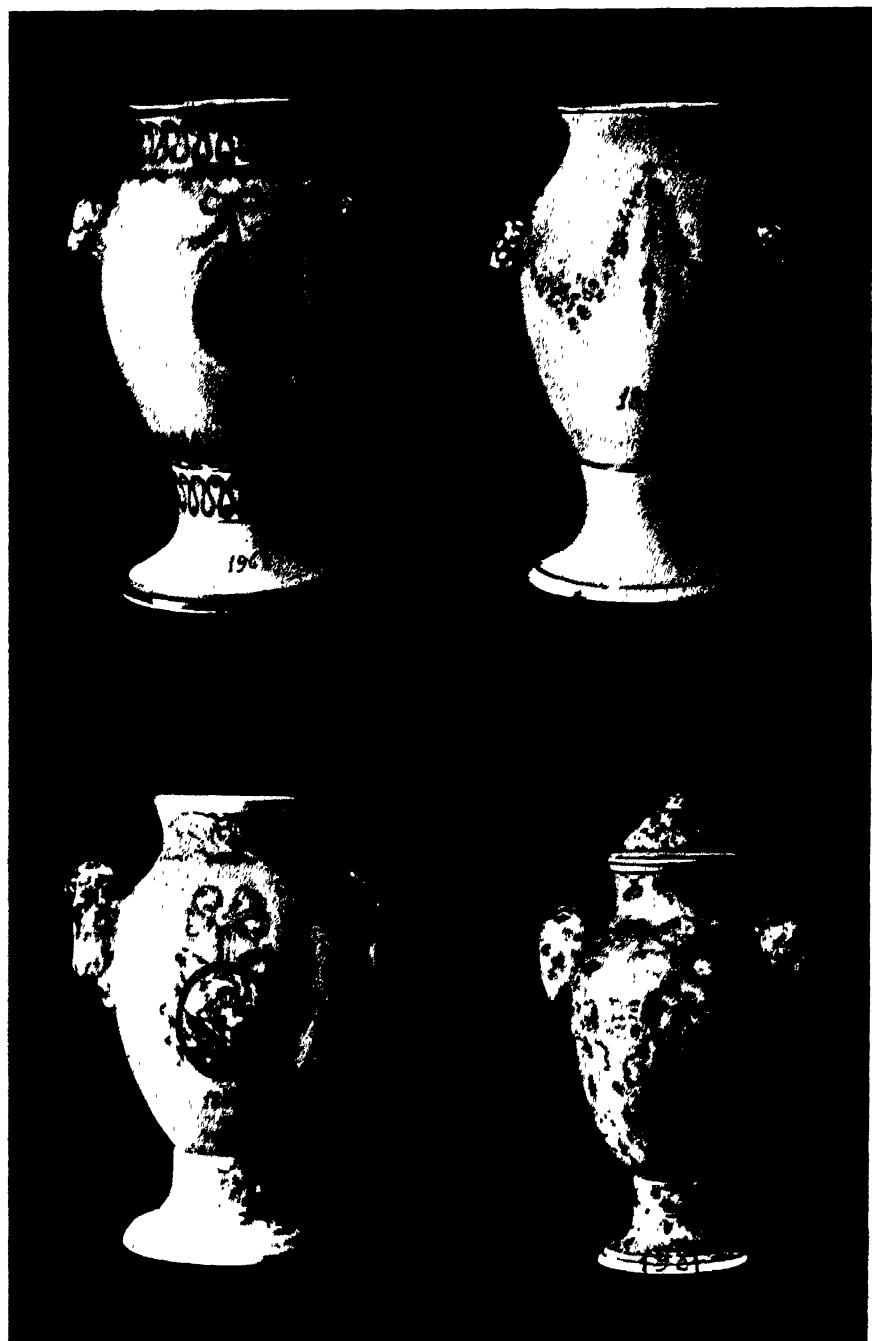








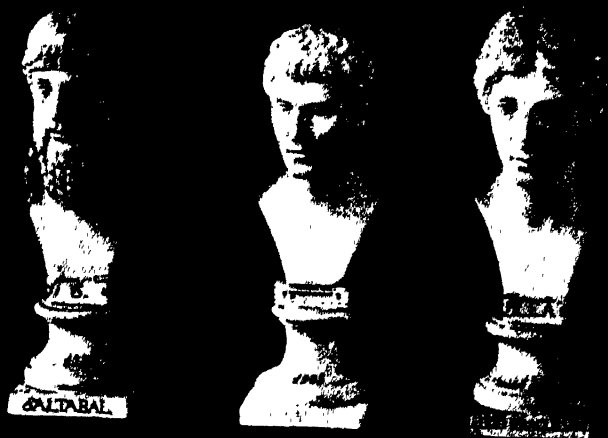




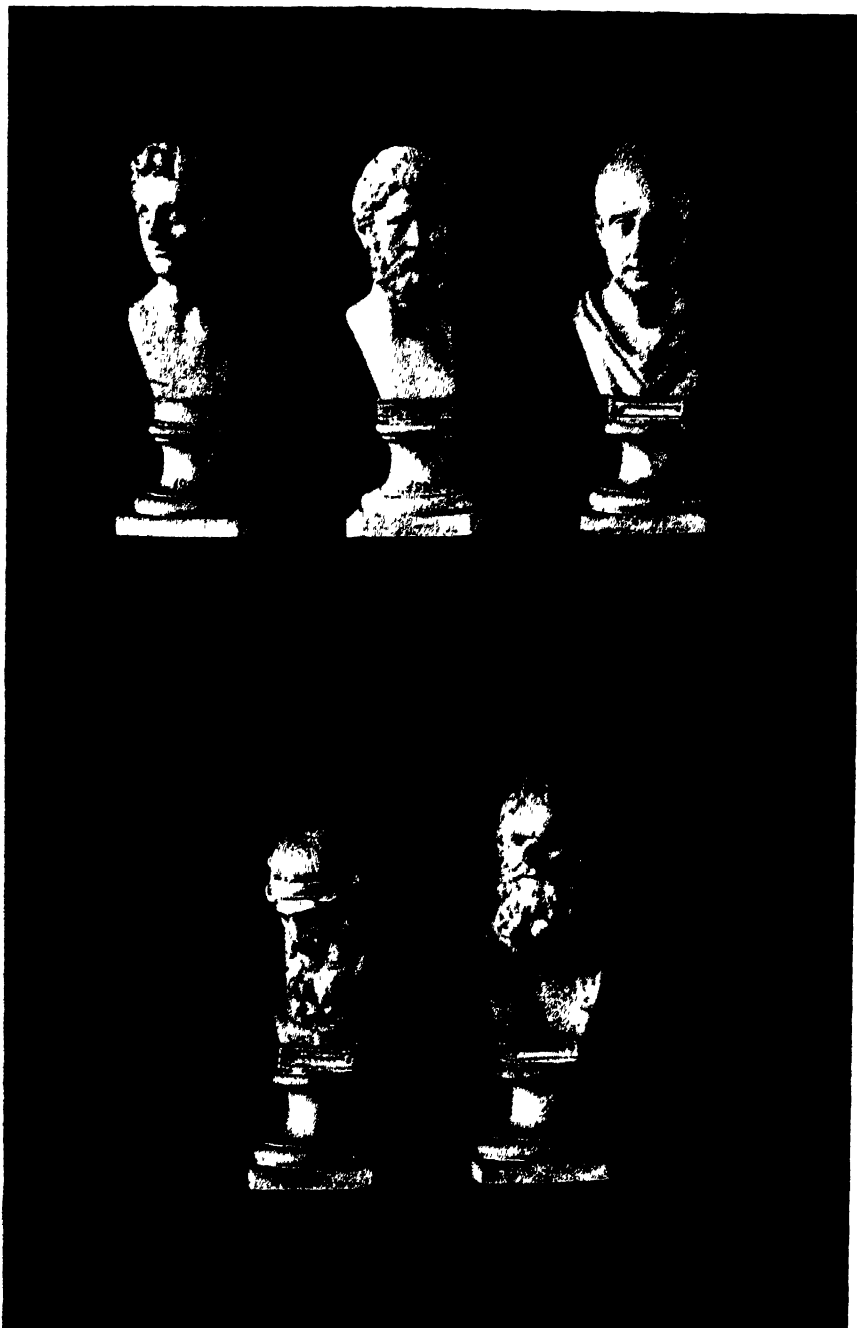






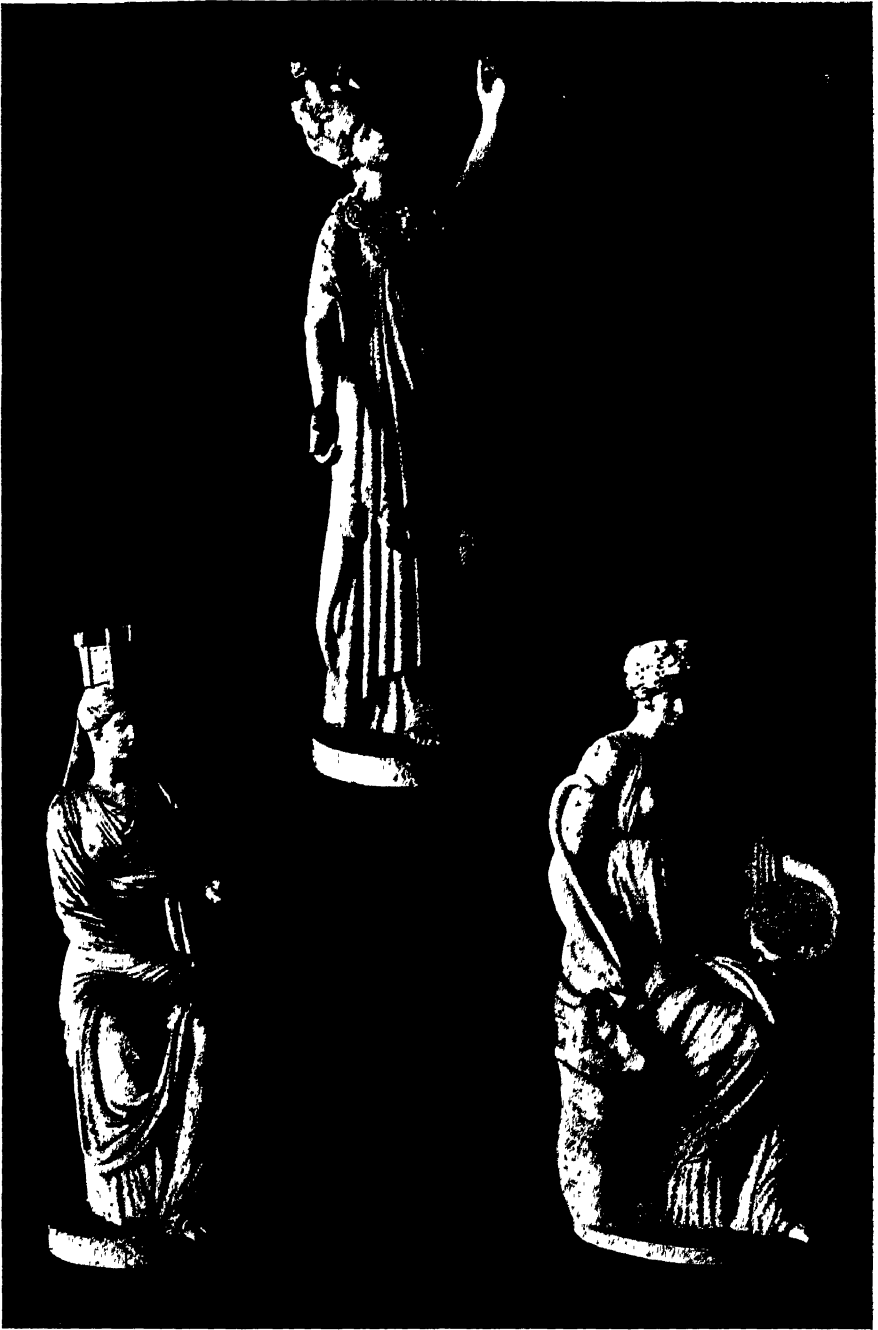






























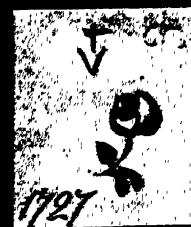
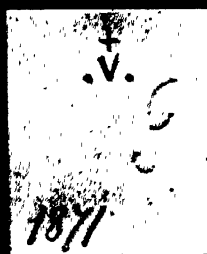
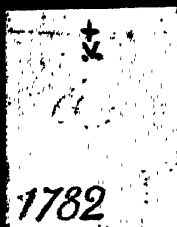
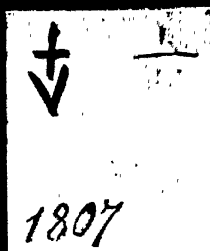
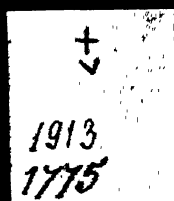
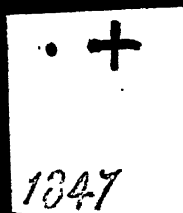
















B

1857

V V

1842

L V

CH B

1859

1877

L V

CH B

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1889

✓ L CH B

1921

L V CH B

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CARDAM .F.

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V

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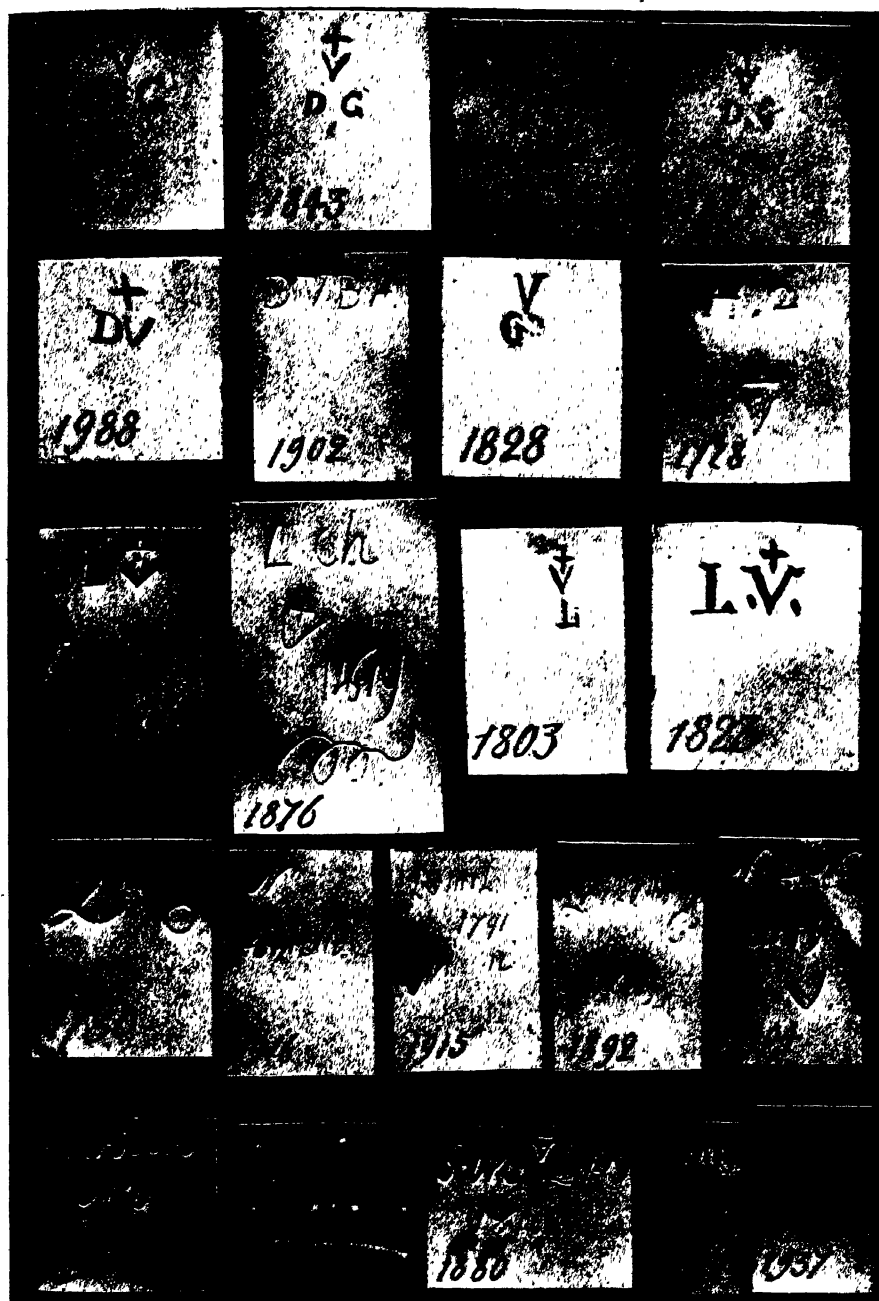
CH B

1859

CH B

1814







2  
1941

6  
1831

✓  
1730

✓  
2 V  
1727

1417  
1938

✓  
1417

✓  
Marzo  
1817  
L C  
1908

✓  
1817 dicembre  
1906

✓  
1905

✓  
1971

XX  
1797 piattello

✓  
1797

✓  
2000

Saxe

Vinovo imit. Saxe

